



BLOOMING NEWS



My Dad is the Best Ever!

by Caitlin Koval

My dad’s name is Chip Koval, and I am proud of everything that he has been able to accomplish throughout the years as a volunteer and board member of GROW-HUB. He has helped our company grow in multiple ways. For instance, this year he made a brand-new sign to go in front of the entrance to the facility. My father has assisted with such things as building a stage in front of the art classroom for when we have events. Some of the events that we host have bands that perform for everyone that comes out. Before the stage was built in front of the art classroom, the bands had absolutely no shade. The bands would have to play their music on the side, and they would have to stand or sit in chairs that were out in the dirt somewhere. In addition, my dad helped to fix some of the issues that were happening in the bathrooms.

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He installed fans on the porch of the art gallery to assist with keeping everybody cool in the summertime heat. My dad also volunteers at all of GROWHUB's Pop-Up events by handing out beer to customers who want one. He tries to help out wherever he's needed and we commend him for that. I think my dad is awesome!



This fall, staff members Kyle and Caitlin traveled to Tallahassee as representatives for GROW HUB to accept the Exceptional Employer Award at the 2023 Disability Employment Awareness Celebration. They both presented speeches, made wonderful memories, and enjoyed meeting new people.

October is NDEAM

Caitlin Koval

October is known as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Because the month of October is known as National Disability Employment Awareness Month, it allows the general population to be educated about the different struggles that individuals with disabilities face in the workplace. Moreover, it gives employers the opportunity to learn about what it takes to become much more inclusive in their hiring practices. What can employers do to make their hiring practices so much more inclusive for everybody? Regardless of whether or not somebody has different disabilities, it is important that the employer understands that everyone has something that they can contribute at the workplace. For instance, GROW-HUB is a not-for-profit company. GROW-HUB is an inclusive work environment that hires people who have different disabilities and people who do not have disabilities. There are currently sixteen employees at the job site who have developmental disabilities and six employees without disabilities. Because GROW-HUB is such an inclusive workplace, it provides people with the encouragement that they need in order to be a successful part of society.



GROW

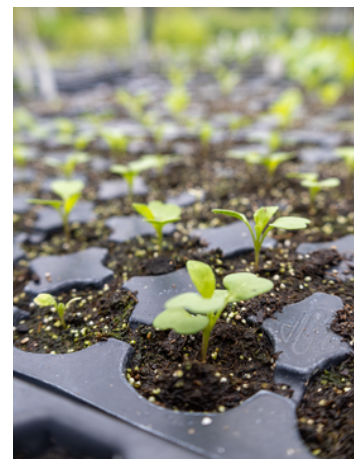
GROW-HUB is a not-for-profit plant nursery in Gainesville, Florida, and it was developed in 2016. The intention of GROW-HUB is to provide people who have developmental disabilities with the skills that they need to eventually become employed. A lot of the people who have developmental disabilities that GROW-HUB serves are high school students who have very limited job opportunities once they graduate from the school district. GROW-HUB provides people with the opportunity to learn about horticulture and also allows people to learn how to work together as a team. A new program in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, called GROW at Kazimour Farm and Orchard, was inspired by GROW-HUB. GROW at Kazimour Farm and Orchard was co-founded by Kim Kazimour, a board member of GROW HUB, and her sister Kory, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The vision when developing GROW was to bring the same opportunities to the family's farm and orchard in southeast Cedar Rapids as GROW HUB has done in the Gainesville area. Like GROW HUB, GROW participants will work with landscape and vegetable plant preparation, planting seeds, and tending plants by watering, fertilizing, and weeding, as well as greenhouse and tool maintenance. As plants mature, the participants will prepare them for sale and work with customers in retail sales. The workers at GROW-HUB want to wish the people at GROW at Kazimour Farm and Orchard the best of luck for the future as they overcome the challenges in the beginning stages of their program. We understand how much of a challenge it can be to start a business from the ground up. If you believe in something for long enough, you will find a way to make it happen.



Horizon Students working on the Friendship Garden at GROW HUB.



Sarah and Katie celebrating NDEAM



Seedlings grown by the GROW HUB Staff



UPCOMING EVENTS

November Pop Up Shop

Our November Pop-up shop is just around the corner! Bring your friends and family out for this free event to enjoy our beautiful property here at Grow Hub. We'll have live music from The Front Porch Backsteppers, food from Stubbie's Sausages, activities for the kids hosted by The Repurpose Project, hundreds of plants for sale, and handmade goods available from 15+ vendors. We hope to see you there!



Crops and Colors Festival

Join us for a celebration of Florida's heritage crops, art, and culture. Learn how to grow and cook nutritionally dense, locally-grown crops. Learn new recipes and cooking techniques. Buy crops grown by local farmers. Join UF IFAS extension agents to learn tips on how to grow these crops in your own backyard or farm. Discover the rich culture and history of Florida heritage crops.



Follow us on social media for more news, stories, and updates!



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Celebrate Generosity!
Giving Tuesday is Nov 28th.

